

The following text is about the issue of tuition fees, which is the money that students have to pay in order to attend university. Read the article, then answer the questions below.

Higher education in England has undergone many changes in recent years and it is evident that it is subject to ever increasing pressure from the financial climate. Nowhere is this more true than in field of tuition fees. Not so long ago, home students could expect to receive 3 years of university education free of charge, regardless of their family income, and only be required to pay for their food and accommodation. Those days, however, are long gone and current proposals from central government are for an annual fee of up to £9,000 for tuition alone, with the result that UK nationals will pay almost as much as foreign students. While that amount has not yet been decided, universities have the right to charge lesser amounts, it is widely thought that many universities will follow the lead of Oxford and Cambridge and try and charge the maximum fee. To charge any less could be considered an indication that the education on offer was in some sense not so good.

Another interesting development could be that universities begin to compete for students in much same way employers compete for the best graduates. The pressure here is that an increased level of fees might well lead to a corresponding decline in demand for university places and some institutions may struggle to fill their courses with applicants of the correct level. As a result, school leavers with the highest grades may find that universities are prepared to offer them cut-price deals on tuition fees as an incentive to attract them to their courses. This trend is only likely to increase when the government's policy of offering extra money to institutions that charge £7,500 or less comes into effect - thereby penalising universities that charge the maximum amount possible. The net effect of this will be to pressure middle-ranking universities that charge high fees, removing some of their best performing applicants who are likely to be targeted both by elite institutions offering scholarships, better quality education and by lower-ranking universities that may also offer cut-price deals.

For the questions below choose True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG).

1. Education used to be free for 3 years. T / F / NG
2. The new tuition fee will cost students over 9,000. T / F / NG
3. All universities have to charge the same amount. T / F / NG
4. Many universities will charge the same amount as Oxford and Cambridge. T / F / NG
5. Employers will pay for the tuition fee. T / F / NG
6. Universities may find it difficult to get enough students because of the high fees. T / F
7. Students with better grades will get a discount on tuition fees. T / F / TG

Choose the best answer for questions 8 - 10 below from A, B, C or D.

8. In the past, British students at university

- A. only had to pay for their living expenses
- B. had to an annual tuition fee of £9,000
- C. did not have to pay for anything when they went to university
- D. paid as much as foreign nationals did for their university education

9. A likely consequence of the increase in tuition fees is that

- A. school leavers will typically have to pay less for their university places
- B. there will be increased competition among employers for the best graduates
- C. the government will give extra funding to all universities
- D. fewer students will probably want to go to university

10. The top level universities

- A. are Oxford and Cambridge
- B. are likely to reduce tuition fees for applicants with high grades
- C. are likely to lose students by being squeezed by middle-ranking universities
- D. will probably charge £9,000 tuition fees for all their undergraduates

Put your final answers in the box below.

1 T	2 F	3 F	4 T	5 NG
6 T	7 T	8 A	9 D	10 B

Name + Nickname: _____

Student I.D: _____